



**For the Environment Committee
Testimony of Alicea Charamut, Executive Director
February 25, 2022**

Rivers Alliance was formed to fight for sound water policies at the state and federal levels, to provide education on water resources, and to advocate for any person or group striving to protect water. If you want clean, free-flowing and healthy rivers, and high-quality drinking water, Rivers Alliance is here to help.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on the following raised bill before you today.

HB 5139 AAC AN ACT CONCERNING EXTENDED PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY FOR TIRES – SUPPORT

HB 5142 AAC EXTENDED PRODUCER RESPONSIBILITY FOR CERTAIN GAS CYLINDERS - SUPPORT

You may be wondering why an organization with such a strong water related focus cares so much about an issue like tires and EPR programs. River cleanup volunteers in Connecticut pull hundreds of illegally dumped tires and dozens of gas cylinders from rivers and riverbanks each year. These items are a blight on areas that are treasured as places of beauty and refuge for anglers, paddlers, boaters, and hikers. Tires and gas cylinders are discarded in these places by folks who either do not want to pay to dispose of them or find getting rid of them a hassle. EPR programs offer free and easy disposal of these products and are effective at reducing illegal dumping.

The way Connecticut currently treats scrap tires is a recipe for illegal dumping and this will continue until disposal of tires is free and easy. Government and industry are not working to create safe and innovative ways to reuse tires in paving, construction, and other uses. This means that scrap tires are a cost to consumers and municipalities and have less and less value to haulers and processors, which means they are piling up and ending up in our rivers. The hard working groups that clean up our waterways would like to get out of the business of pulling tires out of rivers. We have witnessed the success of the Mattress and Paint Stewardship Programs and are confident that a Tire Stewardship Program will not only solve the issue of illegal dumping of tires, but also bring economic development to the state by encouraging scrap tire processors and businesses that use scrap tire in innovative and beneficial ways to establish here in Connecticut.

Connecticut has never had a program to managing scrap tire. It needs one NOW. Please vote in favor of this bill.

In addition to illegally dumped gas cylinders being a blight on our waterways, communities throughout the state continue to face substantial challenges with pressurized gas cylinders. Tanks are a hazard that pose a storage and disposal hazard to our municipalities. As for tires, resources for recycling these materials are limited and effective management will continue to present a challenge without the EPR bill in place.